

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CARACA 14466 142100Z
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 DHA-02 IO-13
AID-05 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 ARAE-00 /070 W
----- 128581 /73
O 142040Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5977

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SHUM, PINT, VE
SUBJECT: VENEZUELAN HUMAN RIGHTS SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS

REF: STATE 302045

1. EMBASSY SURPRISED BY, AND CANNOT CONFIRM, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL (AI) ALLEGATIONS CONCERNING THE STATUS OF 57 PRISONERS LISTED IN JANUARY 6, 1976 GOV ADVERTISEMENT. GOV STATED IN THAT AD THAT ALL 57 WERE CONVICTED OF CRIMES INCLUDING MURDER, KIDNAPPING AND ARMED REBELLION. SOME OF THESE 57 ARE EX-GUERRILLAS WHO WERE CONVICTED OF MILITARY CRIMES BY MILITARY COURTS. EXTENSIVE CONVERSATIONS WITH OPPOSITION PARTY (COPEI) LEADERS CONCERNING HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN VENEZUELA DO NOT RPT NOT SUPPORT AI ASSERTIONS (MEMCONS POUCHED TO ARA/AND/V).

2. WITH REGARD TO THE LIST OF 83 PRISONERS, EMBASSY IS NOT IN A POSITION TO COMMENT WITHOUT KNOWING NAMES.

3. BECAUSE OF DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS FIELD SINCE OUR LAST SUBMISSION IN JULY, WE WOULD SUGGEST THAT THE DEPARTMENT MAKE REFERENCE, IF DESIRED, TO THE NIEHOUS CASE. IN THAT CASE, THE DEPARTMENT MIGHT NOTE THAT ONE VENEZUELAN SUSPECT, JORGE RODRIGUEZ, DIED AS A RESULT OF BEATING BY VENEZUELAN SECURITY OFFICERS ON JULY 25. INTERIOR MINISTER OFFICIALLY ACKNOWLEDGED RODRIGUEZ DIED IN GOVERNMENT CUSTODY. FOUR MEN, ALL
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MEMBERS OF DISIP, THE INTERIOR MINISTRY'S SECURITY

SERVICE, HAVE BEEN FORMALLY CHARGED WITH MURDER AND ARE AWAITING TRIAL IN A CIVILIAN COURT. APPROXIMATELY TWELVE SUSPECTS, INCLUDING TWO CONGRESSMEN HAVE BEEN CHARGED UNDER MILITARY LAW WITH COMPLICITY IN THE KIDNAPPING OF WILLIAM NIEHOUS, A CRIME OF SEDITION, AND ARE CURRENTLY AWAITING TRIAL IN THE MILITARY COURT. ALL HAVE DEFENSE COUNSEL AND THE FISCAL GENERAL, THE CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICER RESPONSIBLE FOR UPHOLDING CONSTITUTIONAL PROCEDURES, HAS SPECIFICALLY STATED THAT CONSTITUTIONAL PROCEDURES ARE BEING FOLLOWED IN THIS CASE.

4. WHEN EMBASSY RECEIVED AI REPORT, IT WILL BE ABLE TO COMMENT FURTHER, ESPECIALLY CONCERNING LIST OF 83 PRISONERS.
VAKY

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 14 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: blochd0
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Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
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